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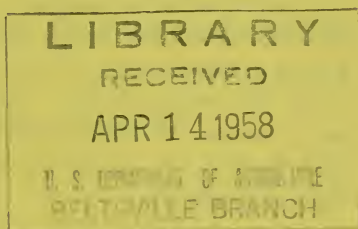
# 343

THE U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S

#343

# DIRECT DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

The U. S. Department of Agriculture donates foods for distribution to persons, both in this country and abroad, who are eligible by law to receive them. This booklet describes the operation of the program, and explains the requirements for eligibility.



AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

## HOW THE DEPARTMENT ACQUIRES FOODS

Foods that the Department donates are acquired in three ways:

- It purchases some specifically for schools participating in the National School Lunch Program
- It purchases others under the surplus-removal program
- It acquires still others as a result of price-support operations.

## THE NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

The National School Lunch Act authorizes the Department to use a small portion of the funds appropriated each year under the Act to purchase foods which will help schools participating in the National School Lunch Program to meet the nutritive requirements of children.

Foods purchased under this authority are selected by the Department, with the advice of State School Lunch Supervisors. These supervisors are in close contact with the lunches being served to children, recognize their dietary needs, and know what foods would be most useful additions to the lunches.

The Department considers the supervisors' recommendations, along with reports on marketing conditions in order to secure greatest value for expenditures. When the Department makes the purchases, invitations to bid and awards to successful bidders are publicly announced.

Foods purchased under this phase of the direct distribution program are shipped directly from the suppliers to receiving points in each State and territory. The State distributing agency then "breaks down" the carlot shipments, and arranges for delivery of the foods to schools taking part in the National School Lunch Program.

## **DISTRIBUTION OF SURPLUS FOODS**

In addition to this limited distribution of foods under the National School Lunch Act, the direct distribution program also makes constructive use of those foods the Department has acquired in operation of surplus-removal and price-support programs and that cannot be sold by the Department without disrupting markets.

Operation of the direct distribution program thus helps farmers by relieving their markets of burdensome surpluses, and by providing increased consumption of these surpluses outside of regular market outlets. It helps school children and needy persons by making wholesome, high quality foods available to them.

## **OPERATION IN THIS COUNTRY**

In distributing surplus foods to eligible recipients in this country, the Department arranges for and finances necessary processing or packaging of the commodities, and pays the cost of transporting them in carload lots to designated receiving points in the States and territories.

In the States and territories, the program is administered by an appropriate agency of the State government, operating under an agreement with the USDA. The State distributing agency is responsible for the proper certification of eligible recipients, within the standards of eligibility established by the USDA.

The State agencies order the commodities from those which are available, arrange for their receipt and storage, and for ultimate distribution to eligible recipients. The State agencies make sure that eligible groups are supplied with foods only as requested, and in amounts that can be utilized effectively. In cooperation with USDA, they help to gain the greatest good from donated foods by providing recipients with information on their

proper handling and storage, and by furnishing recipes and menus suggesting ways to use the foods distributed.

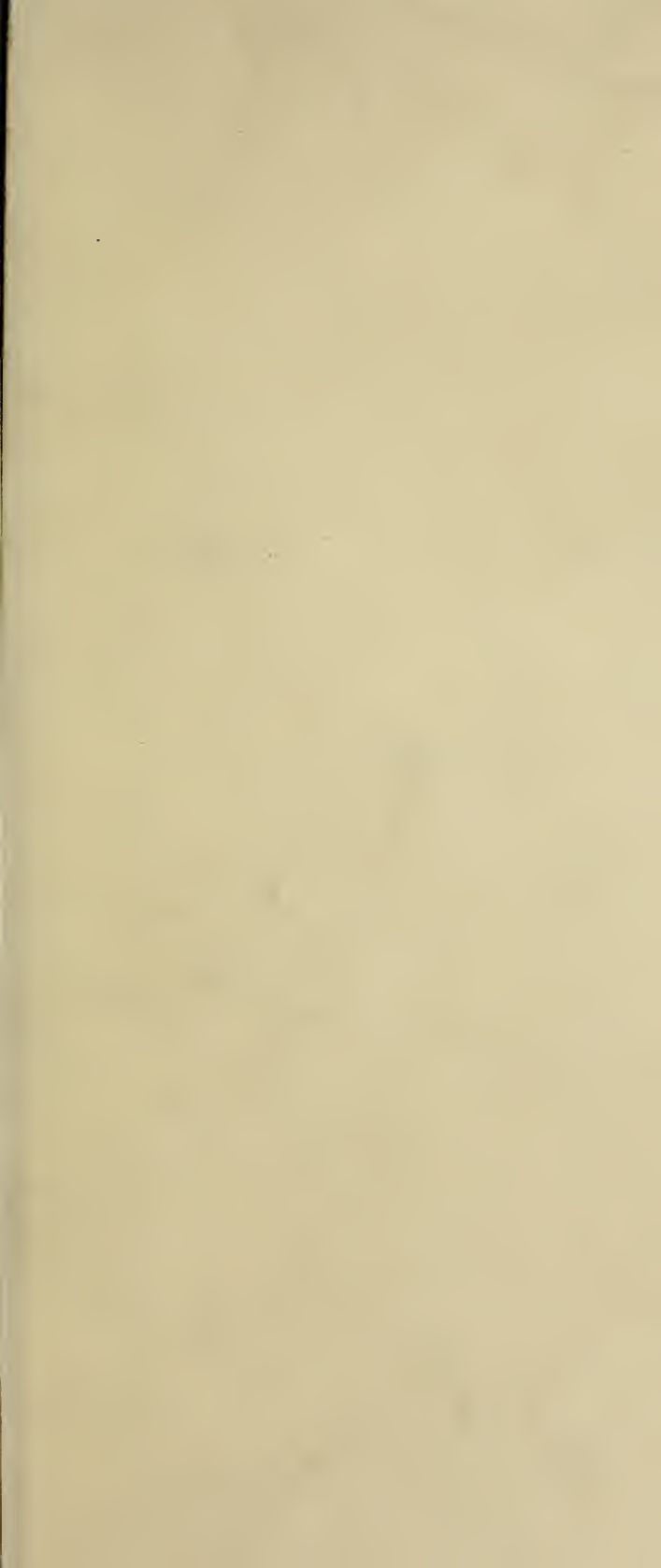
The program provides recipients with an important supplement to the foods they are able to purchase in regular trade channels. In order to minimize interference with regular food marketings, normal expenditures for food must not be reduced because of the receipt of donated commodities.

## **WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE FOODS**

The several laws authorizing the direct distribution program make donated surplus foods available to the following recipients in this country:

- Nonprofit lunch programs in schools of high-school grade and under
- Needy Indians
- Charitable institutions serving needy persons, including hospitals, orphanages, homes for the aging and infirm, and other similar types of institutions
- Nonprofit summer camps and child-care centers operated for the benefit of children
- State and local public welfare agencies, for distribution to needy persons. To receive commodities, recipients must be certified by the appropriate public welfare authority to be in economic need of them. Foods may be distributed both to persons receiving public assistance, and to those who are not receiving any other form of public assistance but who meet State-established standards of economic need. Private groups and welfare agencies may assist the public agency in the operation of the program.

Top priority in the distribution of available foods is always given to victims of such natural disasters as hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, drought, etc.



## **OPERATION IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES**

After all the requests of eligible recipients in this country have been provided for, foods are made available under the direct distribution program to needy persons in foreign countries through facilities of United States voluntary relief agencies.

To establish its eligibility to distribute foods abroad, an agency must first be approved by the Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid, and then obtain approval of its plan for distributing surplus foods by both the International Cooperation Administration and by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. These reviews provide assurance that the donated foods will not interfere with regular commercial sales or the Department's sales program, and that the proposed programs of the various private agencies do not overlap or duplicate one another.

The voluntary agencies taking part in this program are distributing foods—donated from United States surplus stocks—in most parts of the free world. In every case, the sponsoring agency is represented in the country of distribution by an American citizen to assure that the foods are distributed only to those eligible to receive them. In addition, the representatives make sure that the foods distributed are properly identified to the recipients as being “DONATED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.”

## **WHAT FOODS ARE DISTRIBUTED**

Foods donated under the direct distribution program vary widely from time to time. Foods purchased with National School Lunch Program funds vary according to relative nutritive needs of the children, State preferences, and market conditions. Foods available from price-support and surplus-removal operations vary according to market conditions affecting acquisitions under those programs. Therefore, no effort has been made



in this booklet to provide a list of foods which are donated under the direct distribution program.

However, the State distributing agency is always fully advised as to what commodities are currently available. In addition, the Department issues a quarterly report showing what foods have been distributed, and the quantities which went to each category of eligible recipients. Current copies of this report are available on request.

#### **FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Additional information in regard to operation of the direct distribution program can be obtained from the agency which administers it nationally:

The Food Distribution Division  
Agricultural Marketing Service  
U. S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington 25, D. C.

or from

This publication supersedes PA-77,  
"The Direct Distribution of Food"

